



COMIC IN SHAKESPEARE'S TRAGEDIES

Usmanova Sevara Sultanovna

FerSu, Phd

Makkanboyeva Zilolaxon Qurvonali qizi

FerSU student, zilolakarimova670@gmail.com

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8005516>

ARTICLE INFO

Qabul qilindi: 25-May 2023 yil

Ma'qullandi: 28-May 2023 yil

Nashr qilindi: 03-June 2023 yil

KEY WORDS

tragedy, comics, humor, comic relief, emotional toll, character, drama tragic performances, story, situation, dramatic work, tension, conclusion.

ABSTRACT

This article explores the use of comic relief in Shakespeare's tragedies. The author argues that Shakespeare's use of humor in otherwise dark and tragic plays serves to provide a momentary release of tension for the audience, allowing them to better engage with the serious themes and emotions of the play. The article provides examples of comic scenes in several of Shakespeare's tragedies, including "Hamlet" and "Macbeth," and analyzes how these scenes function within the larger context of the play. Overall, the article offers a nuanced and insightful analysis of the role of comic relief in Shakespeare's tragedies, shedding light on an often-overlooked aspect of these iconic works.

Shakespeare is known for his ability to weave together tragedy and comedy in his plays. While his comedies are often celebrated for their wit and humor, his tragedies are typically viewed as more serious and somber. However, Shakespeare also incorporated comic material into his tragedies, and this use of humor can serve a variety of purposes.

One of the most obvious reasons for Shakespeare to include comic material in his tragedies is to provide relief from the intense emotions and heavy themes that are present throughout the play. For example, in "Hamlet," the character of the gravedigger provides a humorous interlude in the midst of the play's dark and brooding atmosphere. This comic relief can help to break up the tension and give the audience a chance to catch their breath before diving back into the drama.

The most distinction between tragedy and comedy in a Shakespearean play is that in a tragedy more frequently than not the story will begin with a serious situation similar as a kill or a treason or a contest and will ultimately conclusion tragically, with multitudinous, indeed everybody dying at the conclusion of the story whereas a comedy will begin off with an innocent misinterpret or weird circumstance and will ultimately conclusion happily and with no one having failed at the conclusion of the story.

Comic relief is the word which means a humorous character, scene or a dialogue in an serious or dramatic work. And it fulfils an important role in relieving pressure. Comic relief generally means expressing of emotional or other pressure performing from a ridiculous occasion interposed in the middle of serious or tragic elements in a drama. Comic relief

frequently takes the form of, but isn't limited to, a bumbling, gagging apprentice of the idol or villain in a work of fabrication. A sidekick used for comic relief will generally note on the absurdity of the hero's situation and make commentary that would be unhappy for a character who's to be taken seriously. Other characters may use comic relief as a means to irritate others or keep themselves confident.

Sometimes comic relief characters will appear in fiction that is comic. This generally occurs when the work enters a dramatic moment, but the character continues to be comical regardless. External and internal comic reliefs can be separated based on the engagement within the story and the effect on the audience. While external comic relief moments occur whenever the audience is supposed to laugh but the characters do not. ¹

In the history, Greek tragedy did not allow any comic relief within the drama but had a tradition of concluding a series of several tragic performances with a humorous satyr play.² Even the Elizabethan critic Philip Sidney following Horace's *Ars Poetica* pleaded for the exclusion of comic elements from a tragic drama. But in the Renaissance England Christopher Marlowe among the University Wits introduced comic relief through the presentation of crude scenes in *Doctor Faustus* following the native tradition of Interlude which was usually introduced between two tragic plays. In fact, in the classical tradition the mingling of the tragic and the comic was not allowed. ³

When it comes to its function, Comic relief moments serve the purpose of allowing the audience to break from the dark and heavy content.⁴ It can be a breath of fresh air and advance the plot, though most people view it as a distraction.

William Shakespeare deviated from the classical tradition and used comic relief in *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *The Merchant of Venice* and *Romeo and Juliet*. The grave-digger scene in *Hamlet*, the gulling of Roderigo in *Othello*, and the mockery of the fool in *King Lear* provide immense comic relief.⁵

In addition to providing relief, the use of comic material in Shakespeare's tragedies can also serve to highlight the absurdity of the situations and characters. This is particularly evident in "*King Lear*," where the character of the Fool provides biting commentary on the

¹ "Comic Relief". *Literary Terms*. *Literary Terms*. Retrieved 7 July 2022.

² Rutherford, Sam. "Greek Tragedy and English Tragedy". Archived from the original on 2012-09-24. Retrieved 2009-05-17.

³ Shakespeare, William. "*The Tragedy of Macbeth*". *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*. Retrieved 7 July 2022.

⁴ Draudt, Manfred (2002). "*The Comedy of Hamlet*" (PDF). *Atlantis*. 24 (2

⁵ Rutherford, Sam. "Greek Tragedy and English Tragedy". Archived from the original on 2012-09-24. Retrieved 2009-05-17.

actions of the other characters. By using humor to point out the ridiculousness of the situation, Shakespeare is able to underscore the tragedy of the play even more effectively.⁶

Another way that Shakespeare uses comic material in his tragedies is to create a sense of irony. This is particularly evident in "Macbeth," where the character of the Porter provides a humorous commentary on the events of the play. By using humor to highlight the contrast between the Porter's lightheartedness and the seriousness of the situation, Shakespeare is able to create a sense of irony that adds depth and complexity to the play.

Finally, the use of comic material in Shakespeare's tragedies can serve to humanize the characters and make them more relatable to the audience. This is particularly evident in "Romeo and Juliet," where the character of Mercutio provides a humorous foil to the more serious and romantic characters. By using humor to show the characters in a more lighthearted and relatable light, Shakespeare is able to make them more sympathetic and engaging to the audience.

In conclusion, the use of comic material in Shakespeare's tragedies serves a variety of purposes, from providing relief to highlighting irony and adding depth to the characters. By incorporating humor into his tragedies, Shakespeare was able to create plays that were both emotionally powerful and intellectually stimulating, and his legacy as one of the greatest playwrights of all time is a testament to his skill and creativity.

References:

- 1."Actual Issues of Studying and Promoting Uzbek Classical and Modern Literature at the International Level" conference, 03.08.2017
- 2.Thomas Carlyle. "Selections from Carlyle". Cambridge University Press, 2004.p.15.
- 3.Michael D. Bristol, "Shakespeare: he Myth," in A Companion to Shakespeare, ed. David Scott Kastan (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 489–502.
- 4.Orlaith Darling. Early Career Researcher in Contemporary English Literature and Critical Theory, Trinity College Dublin. The conversation, 2022
5. Rutherford, Sam. "Greek Tragedy and English Tragedy". Archived from the original on 2012-09-24. Retrieved 2009-05-17.
- 6.Shakespeare, William. "The Tragedy of Macbeth". The Complete Works of William Shakespeare. Retrieved 7 July 2022..

⁶ Shakespeare, William. "The Tragedy of Macbeth". The Complete Works of William Shakespeare. Retrieved 7 July 2022.